

Summary Sheet

Meeting: December 12 & 13, 2014
Agenda Item: Game Management Plan – **Decision**
Presented By: Dave Ware, Game Division Manager, Wildlife Program

Background:

The 2015-21 Game Management Plan (GMP) lays out strategies designed to address the most pressing issues for management of hunted wildlife. The briefing will bring the Commission up to date on the process used for updating the plan for 2015-2021, the timeline for completion, and the results of the public comment on the changes made since September.

Public opinion and hunter opinion surveys have been completed to further define priority issues for the 2015-2021 Game Management Plan. Major issues include: improved communication on game management; hunter access to private lands; quality hunting opportunities; hunting in urbanizing areas; balance of predator/prey management; wildlife-human conflict; cooperative management with Treaty tribes; non-toxic ammunition; and special permit application modifications. These issues will be addressed in the GMP.

Game management issues that have been addressed since the September briefing to the Commission include:

- Predator/Prey Management
- Cougar Management
- Deer and Elk Management
- Wildlife Conflict
- Wolf management

Policy Issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

This briefing is to finalize the 2015-21 game management plan, which will guide the Department's management of hunted species over the next six years.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

The original Game Management Plan EIS completed in 2002 utilized an extensive public process involving thousands of comments. This document was updated for 2015-2021 through a Supplemental EIS process. The Department has worked with the Game Management Advisory Council; facilitated internal discussions between field and headquarters staff; conducted public comment processes involving several thousand comments; two opinion surveys; and taken comment on the draft SEIS. All of these ideas and comments have been considered for incorporation into the Plan. The original public comment period ended in August with the Commission meeting and hearing. In all we received several thousand comments.

Since the August meeting, we have revised the Plan after meeting with several key stakeholders. That revision was sent out for a final public review in November. We made additional edits as a result of those comments and are now asking the Commission to adopt the plan.

Action requested (identify the specific Commission decisions you are seeking):

We are requesting that the Commission approve the 2015-21 Game Management Plan.

Draft motion language:

I move to adopt the 2015-21 Game Management Plan as presented by staff.

Justification for Commission action:

The public has identified many priority issues for the Department to address over the next six years. A good understanding and documentation of those priorities is important to ensure support for future regulations and policies that come to the Commission for consideration.
